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SUBJECT: UNGA ADOPTS COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY

REF: STATE 148158

¶1. (U) Summary. Implementing the mandate contained in the Summit Outcome Document (para 82), the General Assembly adopted September 8 a resolution entitled, "The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy." The draft was presented by the General Assembly President and adopted without a vote. Most of the delegations explaining their positions were from the NAM and lamented that the text did not contain a definition or condemnation of "state terrorism". GA President Eliasson called on all delegations to unite around the strategy which will be launched at a high-level event early in the 61st General Assembly. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Following four months and at least as many drafts, the General Assembly adopted the counter-terrorism strategy called for by the 2005 Summit Outcome Document. The resolution, with Action Plan annexed, was the work of the Co-Chairmen of the consultations convened to negotiate the document. Much credit is due to the Permanent Representatives of Spain and Singapore who led this effort. The Singaporean PR Vanu Menon was particularly helpful to USUN. He made it clear that US red lines were his red lines and kept in constant contact with Amb Wolff and other USUN negotiators. The resulting text, although lacking some elements which CANZ, EU and US would have preferred, provides a good outline for future work which can be used in tandem with the Secretary General's Report, "Uniting Against Terrorism: Recommendations for a Global Counter-terrorism Strategy (A/60/825). (Comment. Use of facilitators rather than line by line negotiations (preferred by the NAM and OIC) prevented deadlock and in this case enabled the Assembly to produce a result acceptable to the U.S. End Comment.)

¶3. (U) The Strategy is embodied in a UNGA Resolution (A/60/288) with a Plan of Action attached to it. As reftel notes, the resolution and plan of action meet US objectives without crossing red lines. The Strategy includes a strong condemnation of terrorism and firm support for fighting terrorism, preventing financial or material support to terrorists, and denying terrorists safe haven. It also identifies concrete undertakings to intensify co-operation and exchange of information. In addition, states are encouraged to implement the comprehensive international standards of the Financial Action Task Force and to step up efforts and co-operation at every level to improve passport and border security. The Strategy includes a list of

measures to build States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the UN's role in these efforts. Adoption of this document will heighten awareness of the need to take action on the national, regional and international level. It will also focus the UN Secretariat on co-ordination of the counter-terrorism activities undertaken within the UN system. Politically, adoption of the strategy sends a message that the international community is concerned about terrorism and has ready to take action to combat it. At the same time, whatever concrete follow-up emerges will be a function of member state political will and seriousness to see this strategy implemented.

¶4. (U) GA President Jan Eliasson, who pushed hard for a result, introduced the draft as a President's text (no co-sponsors). He said that in developing the strategy, the GA was responding to the clear mandate set by our leaders in the Summit Outcome Document and recognizing the reality of terrorism, which affects all of us. "By adopting the strategy, we will send a strong message that the General Assembly is willing to shoulder its responsibility to act against a global menace. We owe it to the hundreds of thousands of people who have suffered the effects of terrorism, directly or indirectly, to adopt the strategy." He noted that the strategy must remain a living document and that the text is carefully crafted and balanced.

¶5. (U) Most other delegations agreed and did not comment on the text. Exceptions were Syria, Cuba, South Africa, Venezuela, Pakistan, Iran, Sudan, India, Lebanon, Israel, and Libya. Among those, India gave a non-political analysis of the text and called for early adoption and finalization of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (an

Indian proposal). Syria, Iran, Sudan and Lebanon, complained that the Plan of Action did not contain a clear definition of terrorism or condemn "state terrorism". Cuba predictably took a few swipes at an unnamed power who has caused economic damage to Cuba as a result of a policy of state terrorism and Venezuela asked "who decides when good governance is lacking". More surprising was the South African statement that although they support the draft, South Africa continues "to have concerns regarding the failure of the strategy to address state terrorism, extra-judicial killings, extraordinary renditions and illegal detention."

¶6. (U) The Israeli Deputy Permanent Representative said that the strategy is an important step forward but its success would require full implementation by states of their obligations under SC resolutions 1267, 1373, 1540 and 1624. He said that there have been 25,000 terror attacks in Israel in the past five years and that he had lost loved ones in his immediate family to Hizbollah, which is directly supported by Iran. He also identified Syria as a state sponsoring terrorism. Lebanon, Syria and Iran responded. Lebanon commented, "Everytime you see an Israeli tank crushing a car with five civilians - if this isn't state terrorism, we don't know how we can define it." Syria recounted the murder of Count Bernadotte and bombing of the King David Hotel by Zionist groups calling it the start of terrorism in the region and Iran called Israel a "terrorist war machine".

¶7. (SBU) Less dramatic but more threatening to the adoption of the strategy was a last minute move to send the Assembly a \$481,000 bill for the institutionalization of the Secretary General's Task Force on Terrorism. The US had objected strongly to inclusion in an early draft of language to the effect that the institutionalization could be accomplished with "minimal additional resources" and succeeded in changing it to "within existing resources". Nevertheless, with no warning to the US from the UN Secretariat, the Budget Section moved to produce a statement of program budget implications (PBI) and bypass prior review by the ACABQ and Fifth Committee. Last minute interventions by USUN and the Japanese Mission prompted the GA President to appeal to the Secretary General's Office on this issue. As a result, the

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statement read in connection with adoption of the resolution indicated that the Assembly would be subsequently informed of arrangements for "absorption" of the financial requirements connected with implementation of the resolution.

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